

U.S. Department of Energy Task Force Against Racial Profiling

**STATEMENT OF YVONNE Y. LEE
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I would like to thank Secretary Richardson for creating the Task Force Against Racial Profiling and inviting me to participate. I also wish to thank our Chair, Deputy Secretary Glauthier for his leadership directing this very important mission.

The Task Force report affirms the Department of Energy's commitment for a fair and equitable working environment for all employees. It contains findings and recommendations which provide an affirmative beginning to meet this goal. However, for these recommendations to be effectively implemented, a firm commitment and participation by all-both management and employees-is needed.

One of the most important lessons I have learned through this experience is the need to respect our nation's security tempered with the need to respect the rights of individual employees. All individuals must be responsible and accountable for respecting these rights.

By meeting with employees through open forums and individual meetings, I have heard from them loud and clear the need for more effective communication at all levels. Such an improvement will help to secure better leadership, assessment and trust building between all individuals working together. It would also promote better understanding regarding security and counterintelligence policies and establishing effective future practices. I also share the nationwide concern over the "brain drain" syndrome affecting the recruitment and retention of our best and brightest scientists, engineers and technical personnel who are committed to maintaining our nation as the world leader in science technology advancement. To combat against this resource drain, we must make certain that our national labs maintain the climate of inclusion, and we demonstrate through strong action that our employees are valued and respected.

Finally, I want to personally thank the Asian American and Pacific Islander employees for coming forward to meet with the Task Force. I understand that it took great courage to share your experiences. During my visits, it was apparent that the Asian American Pacific Islander workers take great pride in their work and that they are dedicated to their professions and to their labs. Although the Task Force's creation stems from an atmosphere of frustration, fear and disillusion felt by the Asian American employees as well as the community, I want to assure them that the Task Force report is the beginning of a strong commitment of restoring trust within the National labs. I know the Task Force has made some impact with the employees already. For example, a few weeks ago, several Asian American employees at Lawrence Livermore filed complaints with the State Fair Employment Commission alleging discriminatory practices at the work place. They credited the Task Force's visits and the Secretary commitment as the inspiration for them coming

forward to seek redress. I also spoke with several Asian American employees yesterday who were very pleased with the report's findings and recommendations. Therefore, I encourage all of them to continue to be involved with other employees and management , and the Office of the National Ombudsperson to secure fair and equitable treatment for all employees, both present and future, regardless of one's nationality or immigration status.

Mr. Secretary and Mr. Chair, I applaud your strong commitment to zero tolerance against discrimination and racial profiling. I remain supportive in the Department 's efforts in implementing these impacting recommendations.

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